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TESTIMONY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE IN THE
CONNECTICUT LEGISLATURE ON: SB 994 AN ACT CONCERNING
LEGHOLD TRAPS

Co-chairman Roy and Co-chairman Meyer and members of the committee,

My name is Rich Daniotti,

I am one of the founders and past president (1994–2006) of the Connecticut Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators Association. A non-profit trade association representing approximately 60-70 licensed businesses in this state. I am a state licensed and nationally certified nuisance wildlife control operator. I have owned and operated Wildlife Control Services, Llc in West Hartford, Ct. as a full time company serving between 1000-1500 customers a year in the greater Hartford area for approximately 22 years. I currently employ two full time employees including myself.

Speaking for the CT NWCO Association and myself we appreciate your consideration of our views that strongly oppose SB 994.

Before I get started outlining our issues, my only regret today is that I can't convey 22 years worth of knowledge in 3 minutes. I wish I could take each and every one of you on the committee to work with me for a day and show you what we actually do on a daily basis and give you the chance to interact with our customers, your constituents. About 10 years ago I had the opportunity to take my then state representative, Mike Cardin out for a day at his request, and he still talks about it today whenever I see him.

I took the opportunity to review the biographies of all the members of this committee as posted on your web sites. As I read I became more and more impressed with the breath of knowledge and achievement of the members and their commitment to family and community. As I read I said to myself, these are my customers.

The passage of this bill eliminating the use of these tools for our industry would be a disservice to our customers and to the residents of the state. They rely on us to provide them with the most practical and cost effective solutions to their problem with the most practical and effective tools available.

The agendas of the organizations sponsoring this bill are well documented. Their stated agendas are to eliminate all consumptive use of renewable natural resources whether it is for recreation, food, research, animal damage control, disease eradication and prevention, or any of the elements of responsible wildlife management. Consequently, banning or restricting the use of these traps is just a step toward achieving that objective.

Without going into specifics about the traps being proposed for elimination, I would ask the committee to ask our opposition **specifically how they would:**

***Catch problem coyotes before people put anti-freeze out for them because there is no alternative.**

***Eradicate moles from lawns. Poisons? They're not that effective and certainly not humane.**

***Catch problem squirrels and raccoons in structures. The ones that don't respond to baited traps and continually rip through the one way door solutions advocated by our opposition. (I wish I could show you pictures of property damage caused by these animals)**

***Re-reimburse property owners for the damaged caused to private property by state owned/controlled wildlife.**

***How they would pay for the public health liability issues arising from being unable to control certain species, such as the over population of beaver causing an outbreak of giardia.**

Maybe the state should set up a compensation fund?

I see in their proposal there is an exemption for rat and mouse traps. Last time I checked, squirrels and beaver were classified as rodents also. Do they

not have the capability of spreading disease and causing damage the same as rats and mice or are they just cuter and more politically viable to their cause.

I would ask that after the hearing, committee members go to their computers and Google the word zoonosis. Zoonoses are diseases that are transmittable from wild or domestic animals to humans. There are over 150. I've listened to many wildlife disease experts give presentations to our industry on wildlife diseases and zoonosis. They will surely make you feel as though it's time to get a desk job.

Should the general public be subjected to restrictions placed upon them by organizations with a self serving agenda? I have yet to see these organizations come up with any viable alternative for their restrictive policies that have been placed into law over the years. Their usual M/O is to get their agenda passed and go on to the next issue leaving others to clean up the mess. There is evidence in many states where these policies have been enacted and the general public is seeing the detrimental effects of the legislation. Consequently, many are asking for reversal of the policies.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.